



**SOCIETY OF
SURGICAL CHAIRS**
Established in 1965

Society of Surgical Chairs Women's Committee Spring Social
April 14, 2021 | 6:00PM EST
Hosted online – [ZOOM](#)

HOST: Omaida Caridad Velazquez, MD, FACS

Professor & DeWitt Daughtry Family Chair
Department of Surgery
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

Dr. Omaida Velazquez a member of the American Surgical Association (ASA), an elite group composed of the nation's most prominent surgeons from the country's leading academic medical institutions. She is a nationally and internationally renowned surgeon-scientist, recognized within her field and the broader community of physician scientists, as seen by her induction into the American Society for Clinical Investigators (ASCI). Her seminal contributions in pre-clinical and clinical research are numerous. Her preclinical research centers on stem cells and angiogenesis, wound healing, atherosclerosis, and limb salvage, all related to peripheral vascular disease (PVD) and vascular complications of Diabetes.

Dr. Velazquez's team publishes in high-impact scientific journals such as Stem Cells, Journal Clinical Investigation, Mol Cell Biol, Atherosclerosis, and PLoS One. She has continuous NIH funding for over 15 years. Her discoveries yielded several patents with great translational potential and discovered mechanisms for homing and pro-repair functions of stem cells in post-natal revascularization of ischemic tissue. These findings have paved the way to ongoing clinical trials for PVD and diabetic non-healing wounds. These unsolved pathologies account for over one hundred thousand amputations annually, in the U.S. alone. Recently, Velazquez's work led to the development of a new gene/cell therapy that may one day eradicate most amputations. In regard to clinical research, she publishes in the top Surgery journals, such as Annals of Surgery and Journal of Vascular Surgery. Dr. Velazquez has advanced clinical endovascular treatments for PVD and Aneurysmal disease. Her work is highly quoted, accounting for an H-index of 43. Her contributions have enhanced clinical protocols and promise to advance care for several unsolved vascular diseases. Her leadership as an academic surgeon is greatly valued as evidenced by her appointment as the first Latina Surgeon-Chief in the USA.

In addition to her roles as a surgeon and a scientist, Dr. Velazquez served as the Executive Dean of Research, Research Education and Innovative Medicine for the Miller School of Medicine from 2012 to 2015. Under her leadership, investigators across campus acknowledged her contributions to the clinical research infrastructure enhancement; administrative processes were de-mystified and interdepartmental communications increased. Dr. Velazquez is a member of the UHealth Joint Operational Leadership Team (JOLT) and Chairs the Workforce Management Committee (Resilience and Recovery) during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Dr. Velazquez obtained her B.S. from Stevens Institute of Technology in 1987 and obtained M.D. degree from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, New Jersey Medical School graduating Valedictorian in her class of 1991. She completed her post-graduate training in General and Vascular Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to her clinical training, she pursued additional years in research and was the recipient of the 1997 Jonathan E. Rhoads Research Award. She received the von Liebig Foundation Award for Excellence in Vascular Surgical Research (2001), the University of Pennsylvania Center of Excellence Faculty Scholar Award (2002), and the Joel J. Roslyn Faculty Research Award (2003) from the Society of University Surgeons. Before joining the Miller School of Medicine, Dr. Velazquez served on the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania for eight years and became an Associate Professor with tenure.



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PANELIST: Diana Lee Farmer, MD, FACS, FRCS

Pearl Stamps Stewart Professor & chair
Department of Surgery
University of California-Davis School of Medicine

Dr. Diana L. Farmer, an internationally renowned fetal and neonatal surgeon, is a Distinguished Professor and Pearl Stamps Stewart Endowed Chair of the UC Davis Department of Surgery and Surgeon-in-Chief of the UC Davis Children's Hospital. Her lab made the seminal discovery that hindbrain herniation could be ameliorated by prenatal repair in fetal sheep. She is widely known for her role as a Principal Investigator on the \$22 million NIH-funded Management of Myelomeningocele Study (MOMS Trial), the results of which were published in the New England Journal of Medicine. [In 2020, Dr. Farmer received FDA approval for the first-in-human clinical trial of stem cells in fetal surgery for Myelomeningocele, the most severe form of spina bifida. The trial began accepting patients in March 2021.](#)

Dr. Farmer has long been a leader in global surgery; in 2016 she was the founding president of GICS, The Global Initiative for Children's Surgery and in 2020 she received a U21 award for her pioneering leadership and contributions to global higher education from Universitas 21, an international network of 27 research-intensive universities in 18 countries. Dr. Farmer has been honored with numerous awards throughout her career, including being a Luce Scholar, a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (the second woman surgeon from the United States to receive this prestigious honor), a member of the esteemed National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine, a past President of the American Pediatric Surgical Association, a past Chair of the Board of Governors of the American College of Surgeons, a past chair of the Society of Surgical Chairs, and she currently serves as a Regent of the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Farmer has published over 176 manuscripts and 24 book chapters, has delivered over 75 invited lectures as well as over 60 international and national presentations, and has mentored over 35 MD and PhD students in her lab.

More About Dr. Farmer!

Dr. Farmer was featured in ComStock's Women in Leadership Series in March 2021.

"Serendipity has always played a role in my career and taking advantage of new opportunities and being willing to change direction"

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PANELIST: Amy J. Goldberg, MD, FACS

The George S. Peters, MD and Louise C. Peters Chair in Surgery
Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery, Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University
Surgeon-in-Chief, Temple University Health System

Amy J. Goldberg, MD, FACS currently serves as Professor and Chair of the Department of Surgery at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine, Surgeon-in-Chief of Temple University Health System, Sr. Vice President of Perioperative Services at Temple University Hospital, and is a Director of the American Board of Surgery. Dr. Goldberg joined the surgical faculty of Temple University in 1993 and served in earlier roles as Chief of the Trauma/Surgical Critical Care Division and Medical Director of the Trauma Program and the Director of the General Surgery Residency Program both for over a decade.

Dr. Goldberg's passion is patient care and surgical education. She is well recognized as a superb educator – winning several teaching awards including Temple University's highest teaching honor, The Great Teacher Award in 2018, the Lindback Award, and multiple Golden Apple Awards. Her contributions to academic medicine have earned numerous accolades throughout her career – the Philadelphia Business Journal Humanitarian of the Year Award, the KYW News Radio Woman's Achievement Award, the Philadelphia Business Journal Woman of Distinction Award, and the College of Physicians of Philadelphia Exemplar of Humanism Award. She is a nationally celebrated clinician scholar with a robust portfolio of highly-regarded publications and presentations.

Dr. Goldberg is widely recognized as a master trauma surgeon and an expert in violence prevention and improved outcomes for victims of trauma. Her specific insights and expertise on gun violence were highlighted in an article in the Huffington Post: What Bullets Do To Bodies. Under Dr. Goldberg's ardent leadership, the Cradle to Grave and Turning Point programs have received national praise for their positive impact on the lives of youth and patients in North Philadelphia. For her three decades of service to the city of Philadelphia she was awarded the Philadelphia Award, this past November 2020. This award is given to a citizen of the Philadelphia region who has acted and served on behalf of the best interests of the community.

Dr. Goldberg is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in Psychology. She received her medical degree from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in 1987, completed her residency in General Surgery at Temple University Hospital, and served a fellowship in Traumatology and Critical Care at the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland.

More About Dr. Goldberg!

Dr. Goldberg has a lifetime admission to Philadelphia's Broad Street Run...the most famous 10-mile race in the country!



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PANELIST: Christine Lynn Lau, MD, MBA, FACS

Dr. Robert W. Buxton Professor and Chair
Department of Surgery
University of Maryland Medical Center

As the PI for this T32, I believe I have the expertise and have assembled others with expertise to help train MDs and PhDs in lung pathophysiology. They will have a well-rounded scientific and educational experience from being part of this lung infection, inflammation, immunity and transplantation T32. I have been a recipient of multiple career development grants, an NHLBI K08 award, multiple industry grants, co-investigator on multiple R01s, the PI on an R01 as well as a supplement to this R01. I have acquired the necessary skills to design and carry out basic and translational research as well as clinical trials. I have been involved in state regional, and national leadership positions. As a Director on the American Board of Thoracic Surgery I help to ensure the next generation of thoracic surgeons are safe and well trained. I have educated and mentored all levels of students, resident and fellow MDs, and PhDs. While I was Division Chief at UVA and Associate Program Director at UVA every general thoracic trained fellow went into academic faculty positions. As the Chair Surgery at the University of Maryland, my clinical interest parallels and complements my laboratory interests. My research laboratory has had a long-standing interest in adenosine analogs and lung transplant injury, and prior to moving to Maryland I had been part of the team of researchers at UVA performing the preclinical studies with these agents in lung transplantation. My NHLBI K08 studied in preclinical models the role of adenosine in lung transplant injury and repair. I have been a co-investigator of a R01 studying adenosine analogs and ex-vivo lung perfusion in preclinical models. Our group has published extensively on our preclinical data and recently we have expanded on these decades of work into the clinical arena. Recently we have published in JHLT our first in human lung transplantation experience with adenosine receptor agonists. I have an active clinical practice in all aspects of general thoracic surgery. My overall research is highly innovative because it addresses our overarching goal of improving the success of lung transplantation by addressing the problem from two totally different directions (donor lungs and recipient response) and thus increases the likelihood of a positive substantial clinical impact. We plan to expand our current research and perform a larger multi-institutional trial to show the benefits of adenosine analogs (specifically adenosine 2A receptor agonists) in prevention and treatment of lung transplant injury. More recently we have expanded the adenosine receptor agonist story into a COVID preclinical and clinical trial, obtaining a supplement to my current R01 as well as an Astellas award to test regadenoson (an adenosine receptor agonist) in human COVID patients with moderate to severe disease.

More about Dr. Lau!

Dr. Lau was named a "Top Doctor" in the specialty of Transplant-Lung by Baltimore magazine in 2020. Only about six percent of all physicians in the area receive the peer support to make this list.

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